THE

Chriſtian Hiſtory;

Containing Accounts of the Propagation and Revival of Religion in *Great Britain*, *America*, &c.

Saturday FEBRUARY 16. 1744,5. №. 103.

Accounts of the Revival of Religion in Boſton, *continued.*

BUT tho' their faithful *Miniſters*, both in private and publick, both in Preaching and Print, fairly warn'd and from the *Word* of GOD foretold of theſe Apoſtacies; yet they gave Occaſion to the prejudic'd againſt the Work, to caſt a Slur on the reſt in general, to multiply and magnify the Inſtances, and pronounce them all Impoſtors.

So I remember, when *thirty Years* ſince I liv'd and preach'd in *England*, eſpecially in the latter End of Queen *Anne*'s Reign; if *but one* of our Congregation, and much more one of our Communion, fell into any Scandal, all the Country round would ring and eccho with it, and the looſer People in the *Church* of *England* would take Occaſion to triumph with their Reproaches; crying out,--- 'We were all alike, 'and tho' we were ſo preciſe we would not curſe or ſwear, 'yet we wou'd lye and cheat, and ſteal, and commit any 'private Wickedneſs;' and the Profane wou'd damn us all as a *Pack of Hypocrites*. So were the ancient *Puritans* with the pious *Fathers* of *this Country*, treated in the Reigns of K. *James* the I. and *Charles* the I, 'till they came over hither between 1620 and 1640: And ſo were the pious *Nonconformiſts*, in the Reign of K. *Charles* the II. I believe there ſcarce ever was a Set of Men more reproach'd and ſtigmatiz'd than thoſe pious *Puritans* and *Nonconformiſts*: And this not only by looſer People, but even by *learned Clergymen* of Note and Figure, as their Writings to this Day ſhow. And any Man who knows them, may ſee the ſame aſperſing and revilling Spirit and Way of Writing in the pre-

ſent Day againſt the Inſtruments and Subjects of this Work in general.

And indeed in *every Party*, where there is an *Enmity* or *Prejudice* againſt any other *Perſon* or *Party*, there is always more or leſs of Blindneſs and Partiality, and a powerful Bent to miſconſtrue, cavil, miſrepreſent, defame and vilify. So the *Papiſts* have traduced the *Proteſtants* in general, and eſpecially *Luther*, *Calvin*, *Beza*, *Knox*, &c; For by blackening thoſe great *Reformers* they thought to blacken the *Reformation* advanced by them: Yea to this very Day the moſt learned in the Chriſtian World cry out of nothing but Contention and Confuſion in that happy Work, and deny there has been any Reformation at all. So I have heard an *Egyptian* Traveller who once ſailed with me, moſt zealouſly repreſent the *Chriſtians*, from the numerous Inſtances he knew, as the vileſt Sect on Earth. And ſo was their glorious LEADER counted a *Deceiver*; and his *Apoſtles* were *deſpiſed*, *buffeted*, *reviled*, *perſecuted*, *defamed*, *made as the Filth of the World*, *and the Off-ſcouring of all Things*. 1 Cor. iv.

Some, after all, have no Doubt deceived both themſelves and others in the *Extent* of their Conviction, Humiliation, applying to CHRIST, and in the Spring and Nature of their Comforts. Some I was afraid of at the Time; as not being duly convinced, humbled, broken-hearted, ſelf-condemned, devoted to GOD, concerned for his Glory, or having a due Reverence of Him: And ſome few have given too much Occaſion for our Fears ſince. Tho' from my extenſive View of the many Infirmities and Corruptions in the beſt of Saints on Earth, I am not apt to be narrow or cenſorious in theſe Matters: And Perſons who ſeem to be converted, muſt be knowingly bad and continue ſo, and I muſt know they know it, before I am willing to loſe my *Charity*.

But the *Generality* of thoſe whom I judg'd to have *paſſed through* a right *Conviction* & *Humiliation* to *Faith* in CHRIST, ſeem'd to come to *Conſolation* in Him, in a Way agreable to *Scripture*, the very Nature and Reaſon of Things, and common Experience of thoſe who are *thoroughly ſubdued* to Chriſt, ſavingly *inlightened*, are *ſatisfied* in Him, *reſt* on Him, and *feel* themſelves in a *new State*, happily *changed* and brought into the glorious *Liberty* of the Sons of GOD: as I apprehend thoſe were: And one or other of *theſe* are common Springs of *Joy* or *Conſolation*, eſpecially at the firſt Converſion.

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The *Conſolations* of ſome were weaker, of others ſtronger: In ſome they roſe to *Joys*; in ſome few to *Joy unſpeakable and full of Glory*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks; tho' I never ſaw *one* either in Town or Country, in what ſome wrongly call a *Viſion*, *Trance* or *Revelation*. And where thoſe *few Inſtances* have happened in ſome Places, appeared but a little while and vaniſhed; † By what I have heard I apprehend that where they were unfeigned, they were only *natural Effects* of an extraordinary intenſe *Exerciſe* of Soul; tho' a *divine Influence* might be the Original of the Exerciſe. Nor do I apprehend *ſuch Effects* a *Sign* either of the Perſon's being *unſanctified* or *ſanctified*: Sanctification being to be judg'd of by the Frame of the whole Soul and Nature of its Exerciſes while fully awake, and not by ſuch dreaming Ideas: Yea tho' it were poſſible they ſhould be Inſpirations, they would be no more Signs *in themſelves* of Sanctification than the genuine Viſions of *Balaam* or *Belſhazzar*. And I know of none but is of the ſame Opinion with me.

But as for ſpiritual *Joys* and *Conſolations*, whoever has a large Experience in his own Heart or a large Acquaintance with the various Experiences of others, has found thoſe *Joys* ariſe from ſuch like *various Cauſes* as theſe that follow.

1. Some in the *Progreſs* of their Conviction towards the Depths of Humiliation; while their Souls were *quarrelling* with the Holineſs, Juſtice, Law, Wrath, Curſes, Truth and Sovereignty of GOD, ſo as to throw them into the utmoſt Tumult; they have been at length, and ſometimes ſuddenly ſubdued, ſo as to yield, ſubmit and reſign into the ſovereign Hands of CHRIST: Upon which their Quarrels and Tumults ceaſing, a divine and wondrous *Calm* and *Pleaſure* have immediately and genuinely ſucceeded.

2. Some from a lively View of the exceeding *Number* and *Heinouſneſs* of their *Sins* and *Vileneſs* of their *Hearts*, whereby they thought' themſelves the worſt of Sinners; and ſeeing the All-ſufficiency of CHRIST in every Thing but *Willingneſs* to ſave ſuch horrid Wretches, were in great

† I never heard of above *one* or *two* in *this Town*; and I don't remember I have heard of *one* in *this Province* to the *Southward* of us, tho' there has been a *remarkable Revival* in *ſeveral Places* in that Part of the Land.

Diſtreſs; but upon ſeeing his *Willingneſs* to ſave even them in particular, have been overcome with *Joy* at the View, and with ſuch *joyful Views* fled into his Arms.

3. Some finding themſelves under the *Love* and *Power* of *Sin*, in wretched Bondage to their *Luſts*, to horrible *Suggeſtions*, *Temptations*, *Oppoſitions*, and utter *Impotence* to free themſelves and ſerve the LORD with Pleaſure; being unexpectedly delivered and brought into the *glorious Liberties of the Sons of* GOD; they have been like thoſe in *Pſal.* cxxvi. *When the* LORD *turned again the Captivity of* Zion, *we were like them that dream: Then was our Mouth filled with Laughter and our Tongue with Singing: The* LORD *hath done great Things for us*, whereof *we are glad.*

4. Some labouring under ſuch *Blindneſs* of *Mind*, that they could ſee nothing of the *perſonal* and *perfect Lovelineſs* of CHRIST, have been exceedingly troubled; when they came eſpecially on a ſudden to ſee his *perfect* and *tranſcendent Lovelineſs*, it has raiſed them into a *Tranſport.*

5. Some who have found their *Hearts* as *hard* as a Rock, that they could not mourn in the leaſt as they could perceive for their horrid Sins and Sinfulneſs, and were in the Way of Deſpair; upon their *Hearts diſſolving* with godly Sorrow for their piercing CHRIST, and even the *ſmalleſt Sins* and *Heart-Impurities*, have been greatly affected with *Pleaſure* and *Gladneſs.*

6. Some after all their genuine Changes, their Exerciſe of Faith in CHRIST, of Love unto Him, Repentance, and other Graces, have *not yet been able to ſee* whether theſe have been any other than *ſuperficial Changes* and *common Graces*, and been in great Perplexity; 'till the SPIRIT of CHRIST has ſhone ſo clearly on them as to give them *joyful Satisfaction.*

7. Some having all the *likely Marks* of *Converſion*, and even *ſome of their Graces in ſome Exerciſe*, tho' very faint and low, and their Hearts exceeding cold, flat and deadned, have been greatly diſcouraged; but *ere they were aware*, their Souls have been made *as the Chariots* of *Aminadib*, to their *great Rejoicing.*

8. Some have been ſo greatly troubled with their lamentable *Diſtance* and *Eſtrangement* from the bleſſed JESUS, as they could enjoy no Reſt; 'till he has *taken them into his banquetting Houſe*, exalted them to *ſit in heavenly Places with Him*,

Him, and ſo ſhown his Glories and Love unto them (his *Banner over them was Love*) as have moſt powerfully drawn out their Hearts to an holy and tranſporting Intimacy with Him; that in the believing Views of CHRIST and *Senſation* of *this Communion*, they have *rejoiced with Joy unſpeakable and full of Glory*. I here write what many holy Souls who have had Communion with CHRIST, by their Experience well underſtand: And by *Senſation* I mean in the like *ſpiritual Senſe* as when CHRIST ſpeaks of his *ſupping* with Believers and they with Him. *Rev.* iii. 20.

As for *ſpiritual Pride* and *raſh Judging* --- ſome lately wrought upon, eſpecially in *Hours of Temptation*, have grievouſly exceeded; yea ſome whom we judged to be *effectually called*, as well as many more who had been under very powerful and far advanced, but *ineffectual Operations*; and who ought not to be blended with, as is the Way of the Prejudic'd, but diſtinguiſhed from the other. Yet ſome of the *hopefully renewed* are freer than others from thoſe *Exceſſes*: and I never knew the *moſt grown*, *humble*, and *prudent Saint* on Earth wholly without them; for if I had, I ſhould hold Perfection in the preſent State: much leſs can we expect the *new-born Convert* to be ſo humble and wiſe as thoſe who have been growing in Grace and Knowledge for ſeveral Years. Alaſs! every Soul *renewed* has the *ſame Corruptions as before*; they mix with all our Graces; Unbelief with Faith, Pride with Humility, precipitant Zeal or Paſſion with Wiſdom, raſh Judging of others with condemning ourſelves: And he ſeems to be little acquainted with his own Heart who ſees not in himſelf a Bent to be *proud* even of his own *Humility*; and who feels not the Riſings of *Pride*, eſpecially while Grace is young, even in his higheſt Enlargements and Enjoyments, as well as in his beſt Performances and the Applauſes of thoſe about him. Even the Apoſtle *Paul* himſelf, tho' one of the greateſt Mortification and improved Sanctity; yet by being favour'd of GOD with *abundant Revelations*, found himſelf ſo ſtrongly inclin'd to be *above Meaſure exalted*, that if there had not been given him *a Thorn in the Fleſh*, *the Meſſenger of Satan to buffet him*, He would have been carried away by the natural Biaſs. 2 *Cor.* xii. And what Wonder is it at firſt to ſee ſome *undue Elations* mix with the *Joys* of *young* and *little experienc'd Chriſtians*, before they have much Time to grow in the ſad, ſurprizing & abaſing

Views

Views of their *remaining Corruptions*; which at the firſt Senſe of their Change, their firſt joyful Views of the Love & Glory of CHRIST, and firſt Elevations of their Faith & Affections to him, they could ſcarce perceive, & were therefore ready to think by his *Blood* & SPIRIT to be almoſt intirely purged away.

But with the common Mixture of their remaining Infirmities and Corruptions, I have generally ſeen attending their *Joys*, high, humble and affectionate Admirations of the wonderful Grace of GOD, and aſtoniſhing Pity & Condeſcention of the SON of his Love, in becoming incarnate, dying to ſave them, bearing ſo long with them while they have been ſpitting and trampling on him; and after all their Abuſes, ſending them his Embaſſadors and Tenders of Grace, employing his SPIRIT, overcoming their Hearts, and opening his Arms to receive them: And with theſe *Joys* I have alſo ſeen all the proper Expreſſions of their lively Gratitude, Love, Praiſe, Devotion to GOD their Saviour, Zeal for his Glory; Love to his Word, Truths, Ordinances, and thoſe in whom the meek, humble and holy Image of CHRIST appears, and Concern for others. And as they quickly found the *remaining Fountain of Vileneſs* riſing in them, the Powers of Grace ſubſiding, and their ſpiritual Impotence in a ſad Degree returning; they have generally grown more humble and jealous of themſelves, more ſenſible of their depending on CHRIST continually, and more meek and tender in their Carriage to others.

And thus ſucceſsfully did *this Divine Work* as above deſcrib'd go on in *Town*, without any Liſp, as I remember, of a *Separation* either in *this Town* or *Province*, for above a *Year and half* after Mr. *Whitefield* left us, *viz.* the *End* of *June* 1742; when the Rev. Mr. *Davenport* of *Long-Iſland* came to *Boſton*. And then thro' the awful Providence of the ſovereign GOD, the Wiſdom of whoſe Ways are paſt finding out, we unexpectedly came to an unhappy Period, which it exceedingly grieves me now to write of, tho' with all convenient Brevity.

Friday Evening June 25, He came to *Charleſtown*. *Lord's Day Forenoon*, he attended the public Worſhip, and at the Lord's Table there: but the *Afternoon* ſtay'd at his Lodgings from an Apprehenſion of the Miniſter's being unconverted, which greatly alarm'd us. *Monday Afternoon* he came over the Ferry to *Boſton*: which the *aſſociate Paſtors* in *this Town* and *Charleſtown*, then at their ſtated Courſe of

meeting

meeting hearing of, ſent to ſignify, that we ſhould be glad to ſee him; whereupon he preſently came, and we had long and friendly Conferences with him about his Conduct, on *this* and the *following Day*.

On *Thurſday July* 1. we thought ourſelves oblig'd to publiſh a *Declaration* of our Judgment concerning him: wherein we *own'd*, 'That he appear'd to us to be *truly pious*, and 'we hoped that GOD had uſed him as an *Inſtrument of Good* 'to *many Souls*; yet we judged it our Duty to bear our 'Teſtimony againſt' the following Particulars, (1) His being 'acted much by ſudden *Impulſes*. (2) His *judging* ſome '*Miniſters* in *Long-Iſland* and *New-England* to be *unconverted*; and his thinking himſelf call'd of GOD to *demand* of '*his Brethren* from Place to Place an Account of their regenerate State, when or in what Manner the HOLY SPIRIT 'wrought upon and renew'd them. (3) His going with 'his Friends *ſinging* thro' the *Streets* and *Highways*, to and 'from the Houſes of Worſhip on Lord's Days and other 'Days. (4) His encouraging *private Brethren* [i. e. who 'are not Probationers for the Miniſtry] to pray and exhort '[i. e. like Miniſters] in Aſſemblies gather'd for that Purpoſe.--- We judg'd it therefore *our preſent Duty* not to in-'vite him into our Places of public Worſhip, as otherwiſe 'we might have readily done' And we concluded thus --- 'And we take this Opportunity to repeat our *Teſtimony* to '*the great and glorious Work of* GOD, which of his free 'Grace he has begun and is carrying on in many Parts of 'this and the neighbouring Provinces; beſeeching him to 'preſerve, defend, maintain and propagate it, in Spite of 'all the Devices of Satan againſt it of one Kind or other; 'that however it may ſuffer by the Imprudence of its Friends, 'or by the virulent Oppoſition of it's Enemies, yet it may 'ſtand as on the Rock, and the Gates of Hell may never 'prevail againſt it.'

Boſton, July 1. 1742.

William Welſteed	*Benjamin Colman*
Joſhua Gee	*Joſeph Sewall*
Hull Abbot ‖	*Thomas Prince*
Mather Byles	*John Webb*
Thomas Prentice ‖	*William Cooper*
Ellis Gray	*Thomas Foxcroft*
Andrew Eliot.	*Samuel Checkley*

‖ Mr. *Abbot* & *Prentice* of *Charleſtown*, the Reſt of *Boſton*.

Upon *publiſhing* this *Declaration* on *Friday*, many were offended: And ſome Days after Mr. *Davenport* thought himſelf oblig'd to begin in his public Exerciſes to *declare* againſt *Us* alſo; naming *ſome* as *unconverted*, repreſenting *the reſt* as *Jehoſaphat* in *Ahab*'s Army, and *exhorting* the People to *ſeparate* from us: which ſo diverted the Minds of many from being concern'd about *their own* Converſion, to think and diſpute about the Caſe of *others*; as not only ſeem'd to put an awful Stop to their Awakenings, but alſo on *all Sides* to roil our Paſſions and provoke the HOLY SPIRIT in a gradual and dreadful Meaſure to withdraw his Influence.

Now a *diſputatious Spirit* moſt grievouſly prevail'd among us: and what almoſt ever attends it, much *Cenſoriouſneſs* and *Reflection*; which had a further Tendency to enflame and alienate, and whereof *many of every Party* were ſadly guilty. --- It was indeed a lamentable Time; wherein we ſeem'd to fall into ſuch a Caſe as the ChriſtianChurch of *Corinth* in the Apoſtle's Days: which had ſhar'd ſuch a large Effuſion of the HOLY SPIRIT, that the *Apoſtle* calls them *ſanctified in* CHRIST; *and thanked his* GOD *always in their Behalf for the Grace of* GOD *which was given them by* JESUS CHRIST, *that in every Thing they were enriched by him in all Utterance and all Knowledge, even as the Teſtimony of* CHRIST *was confirmed in them, ſo that they came behind in no Gift*: And yet he complains there were riſen among them *Contentions, Envying, Strife, Diviſions, one ſaying, I am of* PAUL, *another I am of* APOLLOS---And they were *carnal, and walk'd as Men* &c. 1 Cor. I. & III.

And now a *ſmall Number* from ſome of our Churches and Congregations, ‡ (ſome had been Communicants formerly, and ſome added lately) withdrew and met in a *diſtinct Society*: whereof four *Males* and two or three *Females* were of *our Communion*.

(*The Reſt muſt be reſerv'd to our* next, *which will conclude* the Year.)

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‡ *N. B.* There were *ten* Congregational Churches in Town, *two* Preſbyterian, and *one* Baptiſt.